

Claims

1. A method operative to facilitate the establishment of a conference call,
the method comprising:
 - 5 receiving a conference scheduling call from a conference call originator;
receiving identification information regarding desired conference call
participants from the conference call originator;
receiving conference call parameter information from the conference
call originator;
 - 10 sending invitations to the desired conference participants based on the
identification information, the invitations including response requests;
receiving responses from responding desired participants;
attempting to schedule the conference call based on the received
responses;
 - 15 notifying conference participants of the scheduled conference call time
if the attempt to schedule the conference call is successful;
attempting to placing calls to all the conference participants at or about
the scheduled conference call time; and,
interconnecting successfully completed calls.
- 20 2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
notifying the conference originator if the attempt to schedule the
conference call is not successful.
- 25 3. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
receiving a conference editing call from the conference call originator;
and,
receiving changes to at least one of identification information regarding
the participants of the conference call and conference parameter information during the
30 conference editing call.

4. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
sending reminder messages to the conference participants prior to the
scheduled conference call time.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein receiving identification information
regarding desired conference call participants comprises:
receiving directory numbers regarding the desired conference
participants.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein receiving identification information
regarding desired conference call participants comprises:
receiving names regarding the desired conference participants.
7. The method of claim 1 wherein receiving identification information
regarding desired conference call participants comprises:
receiving a group name regarding the desired conference participants.
8. The method of claim 1 wherein receiving conference call parameter
information comprises:
receiving a desired participant priority value regarding at least one
desired conference call participant.
9. The method of claim 1 wherein receiving conference call parameter
information comprises:
receiving at least one proposed conference call time.
10. The method of claim 1 wherein receiving conference call parameter
information comprises:
receiving a purpose regarding the conference call.
11. The method of claim 1 wherein sending invitations comprises:
sending SMS messages to user equipment of the desired participants.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein sending invitations comprises:
sending synthesized voice announcements to user equipment of the
desired participants.
- 5 13. The method of claim 1 wherein sending invitations comprises:
sending a menu of proposed conference times.
14. The method of claim 1 wherein sending invitations comprises:
sending a request for an alternative conference time proposal.
- 10 15. The method of claim 1 wherein sending invitations comprises:
sending a request that proposed conference times be ranked according
to preference.
- 15 16. The method of claim 1 wherein attempting to schedule the conference
call based on the received responses comprises:
searching for a proposed conference time acceptable to all of the desired
conference participants.
- 20 17. The method of claim 1 wherein attempting to schedule the conference
call based on the received responses comprises:
searching for a proposed conference time acceptable to a majority of the
desired conference participants.
- 25 18. The method of claim 8 wherein attempting to schedule the conference
call based on the received responses comprises:
searching for a proposed conference time acceptable to desired
conference participants associated with a high priority.
- 30 19. A method operative to facilitate the establishment of a conference call
through the services of a mobile network, the method comprising:
receiving, at an MSC, a conference scheduling call from a conference
call originator;

receiving identification information regarding desired conference call participants from the conference call originator;

receiving conference call parameter information from the conference call originator;

5 sending, from the MSC, invitations to the desired conference participants based on the identification information and conference call parameter information, the invitations including response requests;

receiving, at the MSC, responses from responding desired participants; attempting to schedule the conference call based on the received

10 responses;

notifying conference participants of the scheduled conference call time if the attempt to schedule the conference call is successful;

notifying the conference originator if the attempt to schedule the conference call is not successful;

15 receiving, at the MSC, a conference editing call from the conference call originator;

receiving changes to at least one of identification information regarding the participants of the conference call and conference parameter information;

20 sending, from the MSC, invitations to the desired conference participants based on the received changes, the invitations including response requests;

receiving, at the MSC, new responses from new responding desired participants;

re-attempting to schedule the conference call based on the new responses;

25 notifying conference participants of the scheduled conference call time if the re-attempt to schedule the conference call is successful;

attempting to placing calls from the MSC to all the conference participants at or about the scheduled conference call time;

interconnecting successfully completed calls.

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20. The method of claim 19 further comprising:

sending reminder messages from the MSC to the conference participants prior to the scheduled conference call time.

21. The method of claim 19 wherein sending invitations comprises:
sending SMS messages to user equipment of the desired participants.
- 5 22. The method of claim 20 wherein sending reminder messages comprises:
sending synthesized voice messages to user equipment of the desired
participants.
23. A system operative to facilitate the establishment of a conference call,
10 the system comprising:
a conference request interface operative to communicate with a
conference organizer to collect conference information including contact information
regarding at least one desired conference participant and a set of conference parameters
including at least one proposed conference time;
15 an invitation generator operative to receive the conference information
collected by the conference request interface and generate invitations for the at least
one desired conference participant, the invitation including at least the at least one
proposed conference time and requesting a response indicating at least an acceptance or
rejection of at least one of the at least one proposed conference time;
20 a conference scheduler operative to note the reception or lack of
reception of one or more responses from the at least one desired conference participant
and to determine an optimum conference time based on information included in the one
or more responses and schedule the conference for the optimum time; and,
a conference orchestrator operative to respond to an arrival of the
25 scheduled conference time by orchestrating the placement of calls to conference
participants and the interconnection of calls successfully placed.
24. The system of claim 23 further comprising:
a conference calendar operative to communicate with the conference
30 request interface, invitation generator, conference scheduler and conference
orchestrator for purposes of storing and providing scheduling information including the
conference information, information in the invitation responses, information regarding

the noted reception or lack of reception of one or more responses and alert the conference orchestrator of the arrival of the scheduled conference time.

25. The system of claim 23 further comprising:
5 a network interface operative to provide communications services to the conference request interface, invitation generator, conference scheduler and conference orchestrator for communicating with the conference organizer, at least one desired conference participant, conference participants and a network for of components for receiving, placing and interconnecting calls.

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26. The system of claim 23 wherein the conference request interface is further operative to collect at least one conference participant priority value regarding at least one of the at least one desired conference participant and wherein the conference scheduler is further operative to determine an optimum conference time
15 based on the at least one conference priority value.

27. The system of claim 23 wherein the invitation generator is further operative to generate invitations including a request for an alternate proposed conference time.

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28. The system of claim 23 wherein the conference request interface is operative to communicate with the conference organizer to collect changes to the conference information.

25 29. The system of claim 23 wherein the conference scheduler is further operative to determine that an optimum conference time can not be determine based on information currently included in the one or more responses and to notify the conference organizer that further conference organizer input is required.

30 30. A system operative to facilitate the establishment of a conference call, the system comprising:
means for receiving a conference scheduling call from a conference call originator;

means for receiving identification information regarding desired conference call participants from the conference call originator;

means for receiving conference call parameter information from the conference call originator;

5 means for sending invitations to the desired conference participants based on the identification information, the invitations including response requests;

means for receiving responses from responding desired participants;

means for attempting to schedule the conference call based on the received responses;

10 means for notifying conference participants of the scheduled conference call time if the attempt to schedule the conference call is successful;

means for attempting to placing calls to all the conference participants at or about the scheduled conference call time; and,

means for interconnecting successfully completed calls.